Self-Realization Fellowship

Paramahansa Yogananda, Founder
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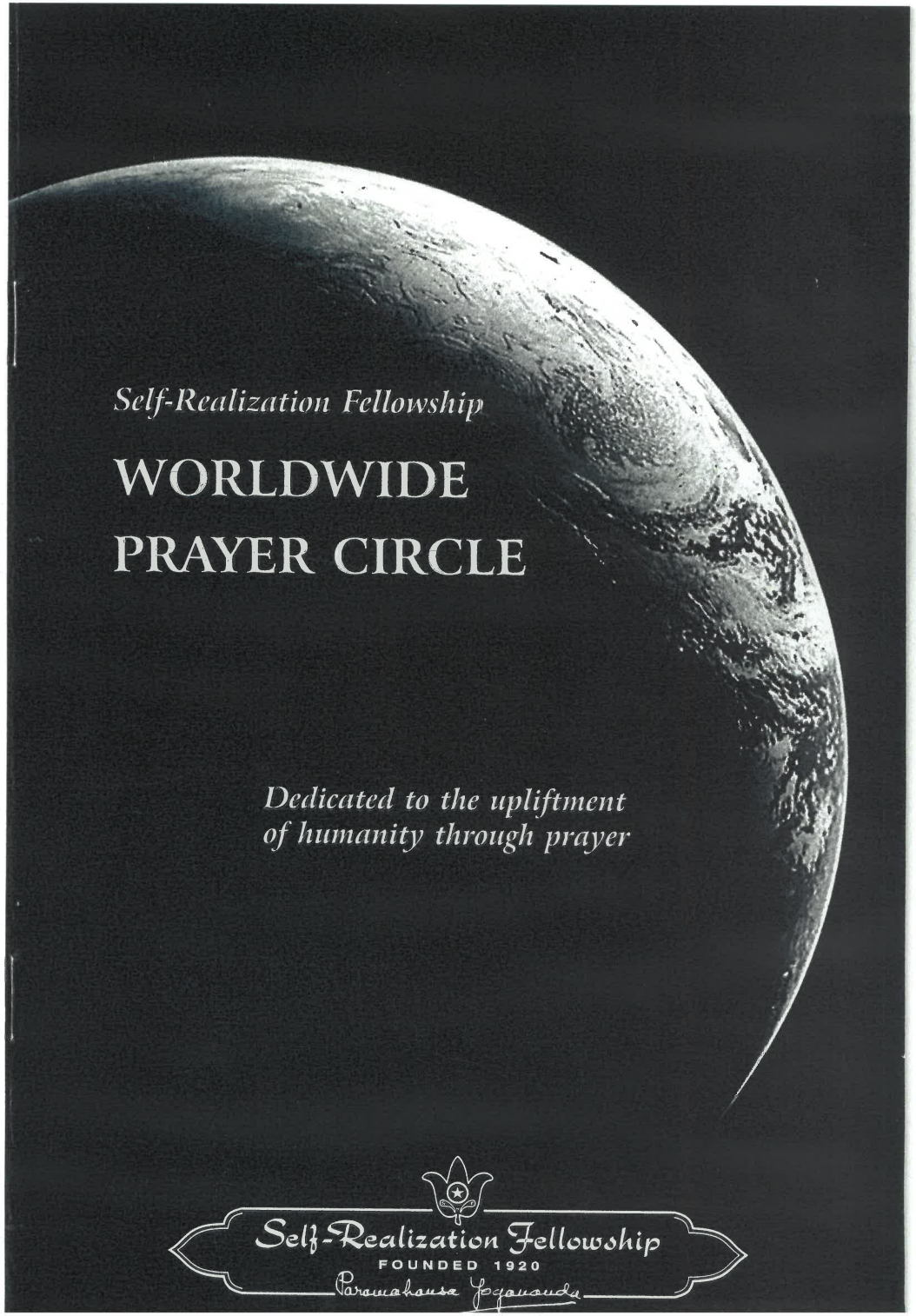
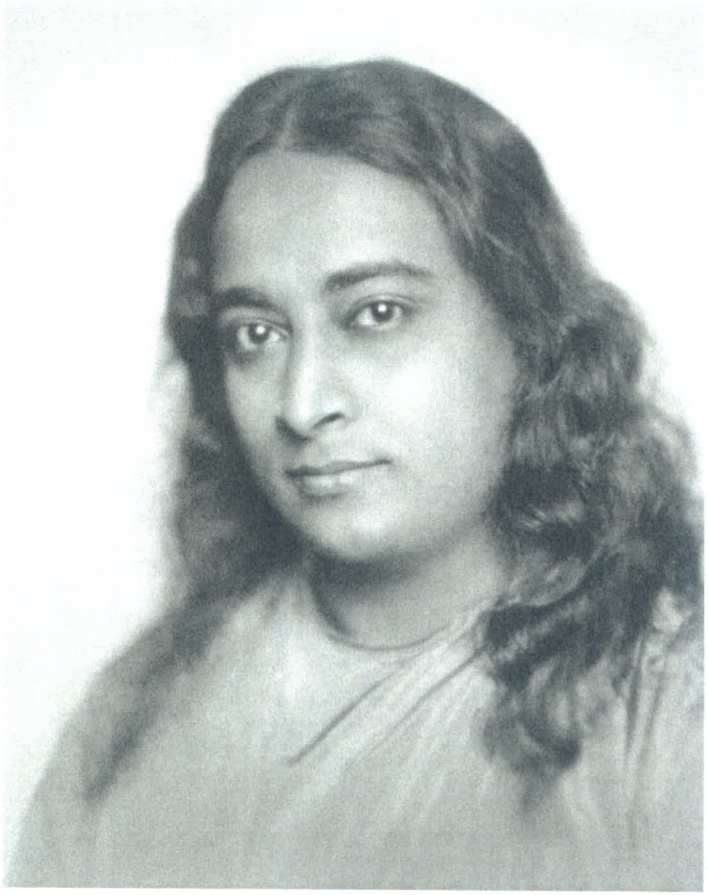
WORLDWIDE PRAYER CIRCLE



Dedicated to the upliftment of humanity through prayer

Self-Realization Fellowship
FOUNDED 1920
Paramahansa Yogananda



PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA
(1893–1952)

Self-Realization Fellowship

Worldwide Prayer Circle

Dedicated
to the upliftment
of humanity through prayer

SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP
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Dear One,

With this little booklet about the Self-Realization Fellowship Worldwide Prayer Circle, I would like to invite you to join us in serving others through the dynamic force of prayer.

Reading in the newspapers each day about some new disease or disaster — or another international crisis that brings the world closer to war — so many people feel a deep sense of insecurity about their lives and those of their dear ones. We have reached a point where many wonder, "Is there anything I can depend on in this world? Is there anything I can do to counteract these threats to the peace and security I wish for myself and all humanity?"

We all respond deeply to such questions—and there is an answer to these problems that so trouble our hearts. The one reason why individuals suffer from physical and emotional inharmonies—and why nations experience social and international strife—is that they have cut themselves off from the source of divine power and blessing by their own wrong thoughts and actions.

Today, perhaps more than ever before, it is imperative that we counteract that negativity. If we aspire to more than an uneasy existence on this earth, we must renew our connection with the divine Source. That is the purpose of the Self-Realization Fellowship Worldwide Prayer Circle. And that is why I urge you to deeply consider the message of this booklet. It describes how every man, woman, and child—of all races and religions—can effectively work for healing and security for themselves and their dear ones. And your personal efforts at focusing the power of prayer—the unlimited power of God within each of us—can do much to bring greater harmony among the troubled nations of the world.

We hope you will join in this worldwide circle of prayer, that men and women everywhere may awaken to a greater realization of the divine power within, and that it may be expressed without as peace and fellowship among all people.

In divine friendship,

Sri Daya Mata
Third President, Self-Realization Fellowship

A prayer that is strong and deep will definitely receive God's answer....By the application of science in religion, your uncertain belief in spiritual possibilities can become realization of their highest fulfillment.

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Most men consider the course of events as natural and inevitable. They little know what radical changes are possible through prayer.

✣ ✣ ✣

The Lord is the Mother of all mothers, the Father of all fathers, the One Friend behind all friends. If you always think of Him as the nearest of the near, you will witness many wonders in your life.

—Paramahansa Yogananda

God is the love that upholds the universe—the ocean of life and power that pervades all creation. Through scientific methods of prayer, we can consciously attune ourselves to that Infinite Power, and bring healing to body, mind, and spirit. The methods and principles described in this booklet may be used by anyone, regardless of religious affiliation, for they are based not on dogma or belief, but on application of universal laws.

The Power of Prayer

Doubters regard prayer as a vague and ineffective exercise in wishful thinking. Often people resort to prayer only when in dire trouble and when all other options have failed. But Paramahansa Yogananda taught that true prayer is scientific—being based on precise laws that govern all creation—and is a daily necessity for harmonious living. He explained that our physical bodies and the material world we live in are condensations of invisible patterns of energy. That energy in turn is an expression of finer blueprints of thought—the subtlest vibration—which governs all manifestations of energy and matter. The whole of creation was brought into being by God first in thought or idea form. Then the Divine Consciousness willed those thought-patterns to condense into light and energy, and finally into the grosser vibrations of matter.

As human beings, made in the image of God, we are different from the lower forms of creation: We have the freedom to use these same powers of thought and energy. *By the thoughts we habitually entertain and act upon, we create the circumstances in which our life unfolds.* Scientific prayer is based on understanding of this truth, and on application

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of the universal forces of creation: It tunes in with God's thought-patterns of health, harmony, and perfection—and then uses will power to channel energy to help materialize those patterns.

Prayer is the science by which we can attune the human mind and will to the consciousness and will of God. Through prayer, we form a loving, personal relationship with God, and His response is unfailing. We read in Paramahansa Yogananda's autobiography:

> "The Lord responds to all and works for all. Seldom do men realize how often God heeds their prayers. He is not partial to a few, but listens to anyone who approaches Him trustfully. His children should ever have implicit faith in the loving-kindness of their Omnipresent Father."

By patient and persevering application of God's unlimited power, we can, with His love and help, create whatever circumstances we desire, and dissolve difficulties and disease—not only for ourselves, but for others.

Directing Healing Energy to Others

How can our prayers influence the lives of others? In the same way that they elevate our own: by implanting in the consciousness positive patterns of health, success, and receptivity to divine help. Paramahansa Yogananda wrote:

> "The human mind, freed from the disturbances or 'static' of restlessness, is empowered to perform all the functions of complicated radio mechanisms—sending as well as receiving thoughts and tuning out undesirable ones. As the power of a radio-broadcasting station is regulated by the amount of electrical current it can utilize, so the effectiveness of a human radio depends on the degree of will power possessed by each person."

The minds of illumined masters,* who have perfectly

* Those who, in their attainment of self-mastery, have realized their identity with the omnipresent Spirit.

attuned their will with God's will, can transmit the divine power to bring instantaneous healing of body, mind, and spirit. The writings and lectures of Paramahansa Yogananda abound with examples of such healings. He explained that though they seem miraculous, divine healings are the natural result of scientifically fulfilling the universal laws of creation. By conveying God's idea-patterns of perfection with sufficient will power and energy to manifest them in the minds and bodies of others, these enlightened ones follow the same process by which everything in the universe was formed.

Any person who prays according to these principles will find that his or her prayers also have a tangible influence. And though our individual power is obviously less than that which a master can convey, when the prayers of thousands are united, the powerful vibrations of peace and divine healing thus generated are of inestimable value in helping to manifest the desired results. To this end, Paramahansa Yogananda originated the Self-Realization Fellowship Prayer Council and the Worldwide Prayer Circle.

The Highest Service to Humanity

Spiritually sensitive individuals feel the suffering of others as their own. In our troubled world, where countless thousands are ravaged by war, poverty, disease, anxiety, and lack of purpose in life, sympathetic men and women naturally feel a great concern for the welfare of their brothers and sisters in all nations. Such individuals often wonder, "What can I do to help alleviate the world's problems?"

Paramahansa Yogananda's answer was unequivocal: "Only spiritual consciousness—realization of God's presence in oneself and in every other living being—can save the world. I see no chance for peace without it. Begin with yourself. There is no time to waste. It is your duty to do your part to bring God's kingdom on earth."

Man has reached a critical point in history, where he must turn to God to avoid the consequences of his own faulty thinking. We must pray, not a few of us, but all of us. We must pray simply, fervently, sincerely, and with increasing power as our faith grows.

We must condition the world's leaders by asking God's Spirit to descend upon their hearts and minds. We must condition ourselves, each and every one, by asking God's help in living so that peace may be possible.

We must pray in church, at home, on the train, while driving, on the job—and keep at it. Each of us is important now. The ability of every individual to seek divine help is a necessary link in the golden chain of harmony and peace.

Prayer is a dynamic manifestation of love by the concerned, reaching out for God's help for man. You can help change the world by your prayers and your prayerful action.

— Dag Hammarskjöld
at the dedication of the Meditation Room
United Nations Headquarters

Realize the presence and the love of God within—radiate it without. Great saints and masters throughout history have taught that this is the only practical answer to the troubles of humankind, for there is a dynamic relationship between our consciousness and world conditions. When people speak of "political," "social," or "international" problems, they often do not realize that these conditions are nothing more than the accumulated thoughts and actions of millions of *individuals*. And the only way to change world conditions is to change ourselves. Paramahansa Yogananda said:

> "The sudden cataclysms that occur in nature, creating havoc and mass injury, are not 'acts of God.' Such disasters result from the thoughts and actions of man. Wherever the world's vibratory balance of good and evil is disturbed by an accumulation of harmful vibrations, the result of man's wrong thinking and wrong doing, you will see devastation....
>
> "Wars are brought about not by fateful divine action but by widespread material selfishness....When materiality predominates in man's consciousness, there is an emission of subtle negative rays; their cumulative power disturbs the electrical balance of nature, and that is when earthquakes, floods, and other disasters happen."

God-Contact Brings Individual and International Healing

But Paramahansaji stressed that the negative vibrations of selfishness, greed, and hatred—which bring disease and unhappiness to individuals, war and natural disaster to nations—can be overcome if enough men and women turn to God in meditation and prayer. By changing *ourselves*—through spiritual living and communion with the Divine—we automatically radiate vibrations of peace and harmony that do much to counteract the negative effects of inharmonious living.

Thus, as a channel for the healing power of God, prayer for others is one of the highest services we can offer. Material

charity, social welfare work, and other forms of relief are valuable and necessary in temporarily alleviating the suffering of others, but scientific prayer strikes at the root-cause of the world's suffering: the wrong thought-patterns of mankind.

Through participation in the Worldwide Prayer Circle, each of us can help in the most effective way possible to bring lasting peace and healing to the world and to any of our dear ones in need of aid.

The Indian Ambassador to the United States, Dr. Binay Ranjan Sen, with Paramahansa Yogananda at Self-Realization Fellowship International Headquarters, Los Angeles, 1952. Ambassador Sen later said:

"If we had a man like Paramahansa Yogananda in the United Nations today, probably the world would be a better place than it is."

A Worldwide Circle of Prayer

Paramahansa Yogananda rendered a great service to humanity through his prayers for world peace and for the healing of others' physical, mental, and spiritual afflictions. Each morning in deep meditation he invoked God's blessings on all who had requested help, and sent them healing energy through performance of a simple but highly effective technique (described on page 18). As time went on, Paramahansaji asked all of the monks and nuns of the Self-Realization Order to join him in this endeavor to serve the world through prayer. Thus was born the Self-Realization Fellowship Prayer Council.

Led by Paramahansa Yogananda's spiritual successors, the work of this Prayer Council has continued uninterruptedly through the years. The Council deeply meditates and prays for others each morning and evening, and performs the healing technique practiced and taught by Paramahansa Yogananda. Countless letters addressed to Self-Realization Fellowship from those who have sought and received help attest to the unlimited power of God that is being effectively directed to others by the Prayer Council for healing of body, mind, and spirit.

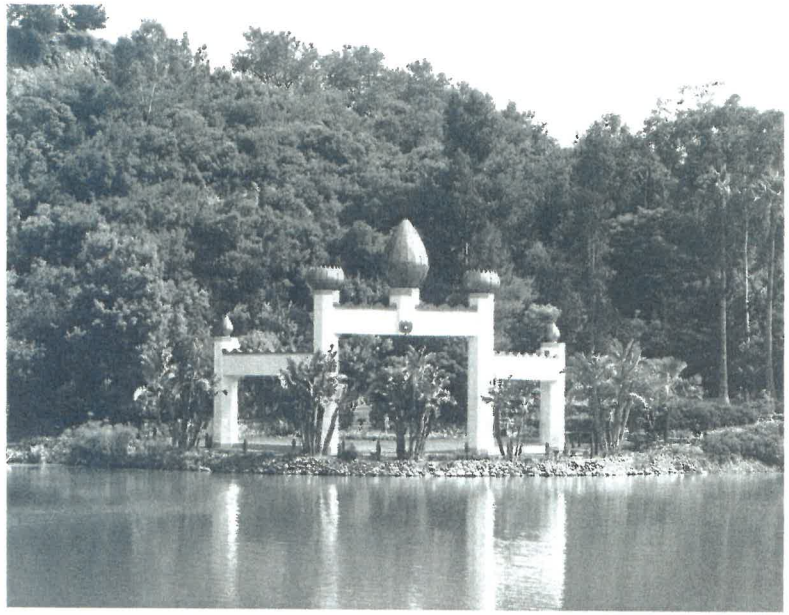
Paramahansa Yogananda often expressed a wish that the healing work of the Prayer Council be augmented by the prayers of Self-Realization Fellowship members and friends in every land, creating a spiritual union of sympathetic hearts—a worldwide circle of prayer. Since the establishment of the Worldwide Prayer Circle, the prayers offered by participants all over the world have helped to create a growing tide of divine power, encircling the globe with harmony, goodwill, and peace.

We hope you will help to strengthen this healing tide with the soul-force of your prayers. Weekly prayer services are held at Self-Realization Fellowship temples, centers, and

meditation groups. If you are unable to attend these services, or if you are a follower of another spiritual teaching, you may wish to have a private service each week in your own home (see instructions on page 20). As mentioned earlier, the basic principles of prayer and healing described in this booklet are applicable by anyone, regardless of religious affiliation. If you wish to participate in the Self-Realization Fellowship Worldwide Prayer Circle, please see the registration form at the back of this booklet.

Paramahansa Yogananda and Mahatma Gandhi
Wardha, India, 1935

Sri Yogananda is reading a note that Gandhi had written (it was a Monday, the Mahatma's day for observing silence). On the following day, at Gandhi's request, Yoganandaji instructed him in the science of Kriya Yoga.



Gandhi World Peace Memorial at Self-Realization Fellowship Lake Shrine

Enshrined at the Self-Realization Fellowship Lake Shrine in Pacific Palisades, California, is a portion of Mahatma Gandhi's ashes, sent to Paramahansa Yogananda from India by a well-known journalist and publisher who knew of the deep spiritual bond between the two great men.

"Scientists tell us that, without the presence of the cohesive force amongst the atoms that comprise this globe of ours, it would crumble to pieces and we would cease to exist. And even as there is cohesive force in blind matter, so must there be in all things animate, and the name for that force is Love. We notice it between father and son, between brother and sister, friend and friend. But we have to learn to use that force among all that lives, and in the use of it consists our knowledge of God."

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"No effort is complete without prayer—without definite recognition that the best human endeavor is of no effect if it has not God's blessing behind it."

—Mahatma Gandhi

Requests for Prayers

You are welcome to request prayers for yourself or others by submitting the names on our website, or by mail, telephone, or fax. All requests are given immediate, loving attention by the members of the Prayer Council. Those whose names have been submitted are included in special morning and evening healing services for three months. They need not be present at a prayer service to benefit from its healing power.

Prayer requests are kept strictly confidential. You need not include a description of the problem unless you wish to do so. All that is needed for the work of the Prayer Council and the Worldwide Prayer Circle is the name of the person for whom healing is desired. If details of a problem are known to individuals in a prayer circle, such details should not be discussed. Otherwise, negative mental associations may weaken the force of prayer. Instead, group members are encouraged to concentrate solely on God's healing power and on a state of perfection to replace any inharmonious condition.

The Prayer Service

(Length: 15–20 minutes)

The prayer service outlined in the following pages is conducted in Self-Realization Fellowship monastic communities, temples, and meditation groups worldwide. It makes use of the two fundamental aspects of scientific prayer: thought and energy. First, thoughts of perfection and attunement with God's help are broadcast to all in need. Then, through performance of the technique taught by Paramahansa Yogananda, healing energy is sent forth to those in need of help.

1. Opening prayer.

2. *Optional:* A brief inspirational reading from the writings of Paramahansa Yogananda and/or a selection from his *Cosmic Chants.*

3. Brief meditation. Attune your thoughts to the healing presence of God, practicing the meditation techniques taught in the *Self-Realization Fellowship Lessons* (if you know them). Then mentally pray deeply for all those who have requested the help of the Prayer Council. In addition, you may pray specifically for your loved ones or for divine aid in overcoming your own difficulties.

   Concentrating the attention at the point between the eyebrows,* visualize the vibratory light of God. Feel that it is the all-powerful Divine Consciousness that is sending those rays of concentrated healing vibrations through your spiritual eye to all who have requested prayer. You may experience a feeling of peace and a tingling or drawing sensation at the point between the eyebrows. In any case, know beyond doubt that God's healing power is blessing those for whom you are praying.

4. *Optional:* Following the meditation period, a short affirmation may be used, if desired. (Instructions may be found in Chapter 5 of Paramahansa Yogananda's book *Scientific Healing Affirmations.*)

5. Practice the healing technique taught by Paramahansa Yogananda (outlined on the following pages).

6. Closing prayer for world peace.

* The center of concentration and will in the body, often spoken of as the "spiritual eye" or "single eye" of intuition; the entryway into higher states of consciousness. Jesus referred to the divine light that is perceived through the spiritual eye when he said: "If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light" (Matthew 6:22).

Healing Technique Taught by Paramahansa Yogananda

Modern science has shown that everything in the universe is composed of energy, and that the apparent differentiation between solids, liquids, gases, sound, and light is merely a difference in their vibratory rates. Similarly, the world's great religions state that all created things originate in the cosmic vibratory energy of *Aum** or Amen, the Word or Holy Ghost. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God....All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made which was made" (John 1:1,3).

"These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God" (Rev. 3:14). Even as sound is produced by the vibration of a running motor, so the omnipresent sound of *Aum* faithfully testifies to the running of the "Cosmic Motor," which upholds all life and every particle of creation through vibratory energy.

By concentration and will power we can consciously increase the body's supply of cosmic energy. That energy can be directed to any body part; or it can be released again into space through the sensitive antenna of the fingertips, to flow as a healing force to those in need—even if they are thousands of miles away. Through the great *Aum* vibration, we can directly contact God's omnipresent consciousness—where the illusory concepts of time and space are absent. Thus there is instant contact between the earnest request of one in need and the concentrated energy sent forth by those who are praying for others with the following method.

* The Sanskrit root word or seed-sound denoting that aspect of Godhead which creates and sustains all creation; cosmic vibration. *Aum* of the Vedas became the sacred word *Hum* of the Tibetans; *Amin* of the Moslems; and *Amen* of the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Jews, and Christians. *Aum* may be contacted through practice of Self-Realization Fellowship techniques of meditation. That blissful communion with the invisible Divine Power ("the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost"—John 14:26) is the truly scientific basis of prayer.

(Stand while performing)

1. With eyes closed, pray as follows:

   "Heavenly Father, Thou art omnipresent; Thou art in all Thy children; manifest Thy healing presence in their *bodies*." Keeping the eyes closed, briskly rub your hands together (palms facing) for ten to twenty seconds. (This motion and the one described in the next paragraph are especially effective as a means of gathering and feeling energy in the hands.) At the same time, concentrate deeply on the cosmic energy flowing into your body through the medulla oblongata* and going into your arms and hands. You will feel warmth and tingling in the arms and hands as that healing energy gathers there. Do not tense; keep the body relaxed at all times. Now, raise your hands outstretched in front of you to about the height of the forehead, and chant *Aum*. Simultaneously with the chanting of *Aum*, gradually lower your hands in front of you until they rest at your sides. As you do so, visualize or mentally feel that the healing energy is flowing out of your hands to those in need of healing.

* Yoga treatises explain that cosmic energy enters the body principally through the medulla oblongata at the base of the brain. In the scriptures the medulla is referred to as "the mouth of God," and cosmic vibratory energy as the "Word" or *Aum*. Jesus declared: "Man shall not live by bread [material sources of energy — food, water, and oxygen] alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4).

Paramahansa Yogananda illustrated this principle by comparing the body with an automobile battery. The life of a battery depends only partially upon the chemicals and distilled water supplied it from outside; it also requires the vibrating electric current from the car's generator to recharge it and enable it to produce more energy from the chemicals. A dead automobile battery cannot be recharged by filling it with fresh chemicals; it needs an electrical charge to revive it. Similarly, a dead body cannot be revived by filling its stomach with food and filling its lungs with air. To convert those chemicals into energy, the body requires vibrating life current (the "word"), which "proceedeth" out of the medulla oblongata ("the mouth of God") into the body parts. This life force is drawn by will power into the medulla from the surrounding cosmic energy.

2. Pray: "Heavenly Father, Thou art omnipresent; Thou art in all Thy children; manifest Thy healing presence in their *minds.*" Rotate your hands (in a forward motion) rapidly around each other. Your hands soon will become filled with cosmic energy. Concentrate on the cosmic energy entering the medulla oblongata and flowing into the hands. Continue rotating the hands for ten to twenty seconds. Now, raise your hands outstretched in front of you to about the height of the forehead, and chant *Aum.* Slowly lower your outstretched arms, all the while visualizing the healing vibration flowing from your hands to those for whom you are praying.
3. Pray: "Heavenly Father, Thou art omnipresent; Thou art in all Thy children; manifest Thy healing presence in their *souls.*" (Repeat the technique of rubbing the hands together and chanting *Aum,* as described in point 1 above.)
4. With upraised hands, chant *Aum* once more, sending healing vibrations of peace and harmony to all the world.

Conducting a Prayer Service at Home

Those who are unable to join a group prayer circle may conduct a private or family prayer service at home, following the format outlined above. This may be made a part of one's regular morning or evening meditation if desired.* Many families have found that gathering together—even inviting friends and other members of the community—to pray for others and for world peace contributes greatly to a spirit of love and harmony in the home and in the larger community.

* If possible, it is helpful to conduct prayer services always in a room, or part of a room, that is habitually used for this purpose, as this will make it easier to focus one's concentration and loving attention on God.

Selections From Letters to the Prayer Council

"Your loving prayers have helped to work miracles.... My healing has been rapid, and my faith has been deepened immeasurably, for I have *felt* God's loving, healing presence surrounding me."

—D.B., Topanga, California.

"I want to tell you how deeply moved I am, and how grateful to the Prayer Council. In every single instance where I have known the one for whom you pray, I have noted that there has been a beneficial change in that person's life. At first I was simply amazed at this; now my faith in God and in prayer has become much deeper. I *know* that God helps all who deeply and sincerely pray to Him."

—R.H., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

"The father of one of our local SRF devotees recently became severely ill, and I was one of the medical doctors who treated him. It was only after we performed the healing technique that his health improved miraculously. I am deeply impressed, since I noted that the powerful strength of this technique works through us producing good effects beyond our conventional resources."

—Dr. G.R., Santa Fe, Argentina.

"For many years I doubted the efficacy of prayer for others—I saw no proof that it actually worked. But the upliftment of spirit that I feel now, which is surely the result of the Prayer Council's earnest prayers on my behalf, gives me living proof that prayer does work. Barriers that seemed insurmountable are slowly lifting."

—B.R., Amherst, Massachusetts.

"One year ago I asked your help for a little girl who was seriously ill with leukemia and hepatitis. Now she is perfectly well. There are no signs of cancer cells in her system. This exceptional healing is a priceless demonstration that man is not alone in this chaotic world."

—E.N., Napoli, Italy.

Keys to Successful Prayer

Sometimes people ask, "What is the best way to pray for others?" Sri Daya Mata has said:

> "To pray for others is right and good . . . . asking, above all, that they may be receptive to God, and thus receive physical, mental, or spiritual help direct from the Divine Physician. This is the basis of all prayer. God's blessing is ever present; receptivity is often lacking. Prayer heightens receptivity....
>
> "When you are affirming healing for others or yourself, visualize the tremendous force of God's healing power as a white light surrounding you or the person for whom you are praying. Feel that it is melting away all illness and imperfection. Every uplifting thought we think, every prayer we utter, every good action we perform, is impregnated with God's power. We can manifest this power in greater and greater ways as our faith becomes stronger and our love for God becomes deeper."

In the Self-Realization Fellowship teachings, Paramahansa Yogananda has given step-by-step instructions for realizing God's indwelling presence through scientific methods of concentration and meditation. And it was his great desire to see those who were practicing such methods serve others from their own expanding awareness of the Divine Presence in all — from actual realization of the world as one family.

The effectiveness of the Worldwide Prayer Circle depends not only on the wholehearted participation of as many sympathetic souls as possible, but also on the depth of communion attained by the individual members of the Prayer Circle. For prayer to bring God's response, it is essential to know *how* to pray. The key points to be remembered for effective prayer are briefly described in the following pages.

Concentration

Successful prayer depends to a great extent on the ability to concentrate—the ability to free the mind from distractions and to place it one-pointedly on whatever we wish. Just as the scattered rays of the sun may be converged through use of a magnifying glass to create intense burning power, so the subtle yet powerful energy latent in thoughts, feelings, and spoken words may be gathered into all-powerful prayer through a definite method of concentration. Vast reservoirs of mental power may be tapped through concentration—power that can be used in any outward endeavor, or inwardly to gain experience of our immutable kinship with God.

Importance of Meditation

Meditation is concentration used to know God. Paramahansa Yogananda taught that before praying it is good to meditate, to gain awareness that we are made "in the image of God." Concentration and meditation techniques such as those taught in the *Self-Realization Fellowship Lessons* interiorize the mind, revealing the divine Spirit within. Concentration on that inner holy Presence leads to direct perception of our true Self, or soul, ever one with God.

"God does not wish us to pray like beggars," Paramahansaji said, "wheedling Him to give us what we want. Like any other loving father, He delights in fulfilling our worthy wishes. Therefore, first establish your identity with Him through meditation. Then you may ask what you need of your Father with a child's loving expectation, knowing that your request will be granted."

The Power of Will

Will power is an essential element in prayer. "Continuous, calm, powerful use of the will shakes the forces of creation and brings a response from the Infinite," Parama-

hansaji said. "When you persist, refusing to accept failure, the object of will must materialize. When you continuously work that will through your thoughts and activities, what you are wishing for has to come about. Even though there is nothing in the world to conform to your wish, when your will persists, the desired result will somehow manifest. In that kind of will lies God's answer; because will comes from God, and continuous will is divine will."

In prayer it is necessary to distinguish between a passive attitude that God will do everything, and the other extreme of relying only on our own efforts. "A balance should be struck between the medieval idea of wholly depending on God and the modern way of sole reliance on the ego," Paramahansa Yogananda explained.

When Jesus prayed, "Thy will be done," before undergoing the trial of crucifixion, he was not denying his own will. It took complete mastery of will to surrender to God's divine plan for his life. Few people have developed their will power to that extent. But God expects us as His children to exercise His gifts of reason, will, and feeling to the best of our ability in every endeavor. While utilizing all means at our disposal to achieve success, we should simultaneously seek guidance from the Divine Presence within. This balanced attitude leads to poise, understanding, harmonization of our human and divine faculties, and attunement of our human will with the will of God.

Devotion, Love for God

Prayer imbued with devotion is the most effective prayer. Devotion, love for God, is the magnetic attraction of the heart that God cannot resist. Paramahansa Yogananda said: "The Searcher of Hearts wants only your sincere love. He is like a little child: someone may offer Him his whole wealth and He doesn't want it; and another cries to Him,

'O Lord, I love You!' and into that devotee's heart He comes running."

Knowing all things before we ask,* God is more interested in our love than in long-winded prayers. John Bunyan said, "In prayer it is better to have a heart without words than words without a heart." Mechanical prayer, devoid of attention and feeling, is like absentmindedly offering wilted flowers to the Lord—an offering not likely to get much response! But if we call again and again to God, with devotion, concentration, and will power, we will come to know beyond doubt that our prayers are heard and answered by that Divine One whose power and loving concern for us is absolute and unlimited.

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Blessed are those who pray for others, for in so doing, they become aware of the unity of all life. We are not isolated beings, struggling alone against the forces of adversity. Our happiness is linked with the happiness of all; our highest fulfillment lies in the welfare of all. To all of you who realize this truth and give of your time and sympathy in participating in the Worldwide Prayer Circle, we extend our deep appreciation. Through such selfless service to humanity, may you ever be aware of the constant protection and all-satisfying love of God.

SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP

* "...Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him" (Matthew 6:8).

"Let us pray in our hearts for a League of Souls and a United World. Though we may seem divided by race, creed, color, class, and political prejudices, still, as children of the one God we are able in our souls to feel brotherhood and world unity. May we work for the creation of a United World in which every nation will be a useful part, guided by God through man's enlightened conscience.

"In our hearts we can all learn to be free from hate and selfishness. Let us pray for harmony among the nations, that they march hand in hand through the gate of a fair new civilization."

—*Paramahansa Yogananda*

We invite you to join us in serving the world family through prayer...

If you wish to participate in the Self-Realization Fellowship Worldwide Prayer Circle, you are welcome to register on our website; or send this form to us by mail or fax (please see below).

PLEASE PRINT

Date _____

Name _____
Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss

Address _____

City and State _____

Zip or Postal Code _____ Country _____

Telephone (optional) _____

Email Address _____

Reference Number *(if SRF student)* _____

☐ I plan to conduct private or family prayer services in my home.

☐ I am attending prayer services held at the Self-Realization Fellowship temple or meditation center in my area.

☐ I am a student of the *Self-Realization Fellowship Lessons* and would like information about the Self-Realization Fellowship temple or meditation center nearest me.

☐ I am not a student of the *Self-Realization Fellowship Lessons* and would like to receive more information about the teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda.

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Self-Realization Fellowship

Self-Realization Fellowship is an international nonprofit religious organization founded in 1920 by Paramahansa Yogananda to introduce to people of all races, cultures, and creeds the ancient science and philosophy of Yoga and its time-honored methods of meditation. Among the society's aims and ideals: To foster understanding and cooperation among all religions and a greater awareness of their underlying unity; and to disseminate a knowledge of definite scientific techniques for attaining direct personal experience of God.

Widely revered as one of the preeminent spiritual figures of our time, Paramahansa Yogananda was born in northern India in 1893. Invited in 1920 to serve as India's delegate to an international congress of religious leaders in Boston, he remained in the United States for more than thirty years, until his passing in 1952. Through his life and teachings he contributed in far-reaching ways to an appreciation in the West of the spiritual wisdom of the East. His *Autobiography of a Yogi* is considered a modern spiritual classic.

The following tribute was paid to Sri Yogananda by the Government of India on the occasion of issuing a special commemorative stamp in his honor: "The ideal of love for God and service to humanity found full expression in the life of Paramahansa Yogananda.... Though the major part of his life was spent outside India, still he takes his place among our great saints. His work continues to grow and shine ever more brightly, drawing people everywhere on the path of the pilgrimage of the Spirit."

Today the spiritual and humanitarian work begun by Paramahansa Yogananda continues under the direction of Sri Mrinalini Mata, one of his closest disciples and current president of Self-Realization Fellowship/Yogoda Satsanga Society of India. In addition to publishing Sri Yogananda's writings and recorded talks, Self-Realization Fellowship oversees temples, retreats, and meditation centers around the world; the monastic communities of the Self-Realization Order; and the Worldwide Prayer Circle.

If you are interested in knowing more about the teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda, you will find information on our website: www.yogananda-srf.org. You are also welcome to request — either on our website or by phone, fax, or mail — our introductory literature and a catalog listing all of our books, photographs, recorded talks, and music.

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